

BUSINESS



AZRIELA JAFFE

Changing workplace saps loyalty

In the middle of our current drought, we often talk about a shortage of water. There's another shortage going on around these parts, one that is felt in most households in our country. It is a shortage of loyalty.

With divorce rates climbing above 50 percent, and corporate downsizings no longer considered unusual, we are losing, as a nation, a commitment to the concept of "till death do us part."

The lack of regard for loyalty is felt on both sides — no one holds all of the blame. Employers are not only downsizing, but also pulling out all of their magic tricks to try to retain employees who are asking for more than just a job — they want an experience. Savvy employees capitalize on the labor shortage and hop from company to company chasing better benefits, salaries and career opportunities.

And there's plenty of hopping between marriages as well. Since my husband married me the second time around, I hold no judgment toward second marriages, or moving on from a dissatisfying job to a new one when the time is right. My husband and I have both benefited from living in a culture where remarriage and changing employers is condoned.

However, we all pay a price for these freedoms. As much as we appreciate the expansiveness of our culture, we also suffer the consequences of a drought in the kind of commitment and loyalty that makes us feel secure and safe. We aren't sure what we can count on anymore, and certainly, for most of us, it's not our employer.

Terry Care of Camp Hill is a

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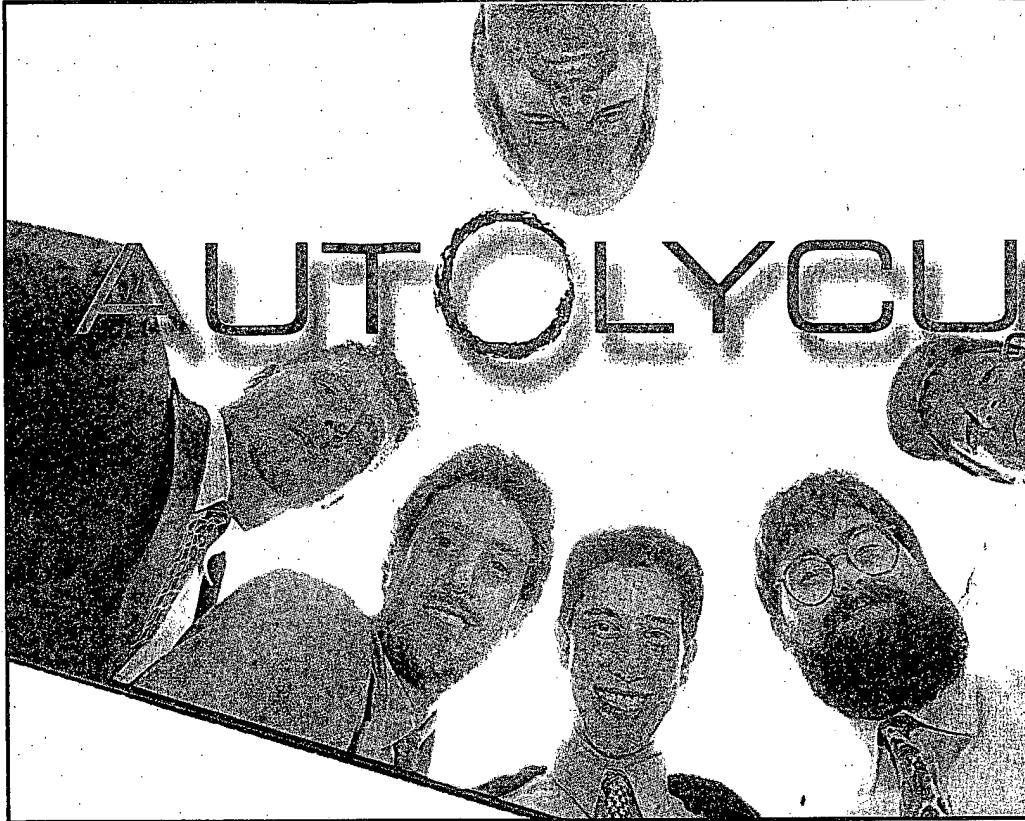


PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY JOHN C. WHI

The executive team at Autolycus.com includes, top, Dwayne Bender, general manager, and, from left, Sean Barowski, executive vice president; secretary-treasurer; Jason L. Bowser, president and chief executive officer; Gene Bangert, director of informational services; and Lloyd Ector. Quay Fahnstock, director of marketing, is not pictured.

New perspective

SOFTWARE DEVELOPER PUTS HIGH-TECH TWIST ON VIRTUALITY

BY DAVID DEKOK
OF THE PATRIOT-NEWS

No one can accuse the young men of Autolycus.com, a West Shore technology start-up, of failing to think big.

They dream of the day when they will use their virtual reality software to present the pyra-

mids of Egypt in three-dimensional splendor over the Internet.

"We can apply the technology to just about anything," said Jason L. Bowser, 24, president and chief executive officer of Autolycus. "Our biggest concern is handling the growth of staffing to handle the work that we will get."

What Autolycus does — and

does quite well — is to produce 3-D images of people, places and things that can be rotated 360 degrees on a computer screen.

"The ability to spin the shirt and to see it in the back," said Andrew Justice, one of the principals in the firm. "Without ever going there, you can be there."

Bowser sees the fashion and real estate industries as logical

customers for the technology. On the Autolycus.com Web site are images of several models which can be rotated to see how the clothes look from any angle.

That sort of technology is available from another company, 3D Shopping.com of Venice, Calif., but does not appear to provide so smooth a turning motion as the Autolycus software.

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TECHNOLOGY/Firm gives new twist to virtual reality

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from Bamboo.com, a company with close ties to the National Association of Realtors, Autolycus' virtual tours allow an actual "walk-through" of a building from room to room. They've done a virtual campus tour for Dickinson College in Carlisle.

Autolycus is in the process of converting a 6,500-square-foot warehouse in Mechanicsburg into a combination headquarters and studio. Bowser said they have enough money from investors to cover their expenses and are looking toward an initial public stock offering down

the road.

Those investors include an official of Internet backbone provider UUNET and Bowser's father, a senior vice president at Highmark Inc. "Everybody wants to invest," he said.

On Tuesday, from 1 to 4 p.m., Autolycus will host a presentation of Apple Computer Inc.'s new Final Cut digital streaming video production technology at the Holiday Inn West on the Carlisle Pike in Hampden Twp. Autolycus technology also will be on display.

The atmosphere at Autolycus is that of a fraternity house with good bottom-line prospects. On a recent

day, the recycling bin in front of the firm's headquarters in Lower Allen Twp. was loaded with Harp Lager empties, and Bowser and Justice briefly expounded on the merits of Harp and Guinness beers. "I have a blast," Bowser said. "I'm here 12 to 13 hours a day working. The whole ride is fun. I love what I do."

Justice, who owns Macs N PCs, the successor to T.R. Vreeland's MacTime computers, and Bowser, who formerly managed the graphic design lab at Towson State University in Maryland, founded Autolycus in February to pursue Justice's desire to do something with virtual

reality software.

"Andrew had been wanting to get into virtual reality," Bowser said. "A friend of his came across the next best step to getting there. I said, 'I can do that.' He said, 'No way.' We bought some VR authoring software, improved upon it, and within a couple of weeks we had a decent-looking product."

Quay Falmestock, a Mount Holy Springs native who played with Bowser in the band Group Therapy in high school, joined as marketing director when he returned to the area last spring.

Gene Bangert, whose family has owned Welsh Brothers Printing in

Harrisburg since 1919, is Autolycus' technical guru, responsible for, among other things, developing the proprietary compression algorithms that allow the virtual reality files to take up minimal space.

He also does free-lance image analysis for the Hubble Space Telescope program at home on high-end computers. The process involves running the telescope's electronic images through software to improve their clarity.

Bangert is a highly rated Apple Macintosh technician, which is what he was doing when Justice acquired MacTime Computers after Vreeland decided he wanted to be a

commercial airline pilot. Sean Barowski, who owns but does not manage Kokomo's, is head of sales for Autolycus. The former insurance agent said Autolycus "is my passion."

"This is a niche-market opportunity for businesses," he said. "Anything you can think of is a market." Dan Trimble, who also is in sales, will concentrate in particular on the sports business. Autolycus is in the process of designing a virtual stadium tour for the Harrisburg Senators that will allow a visitor to the Senators Web site to see what the view is from any seat in the ballpark.